tube, but a little further in advance in the same schedule you will find the following regulations for "Chimney-pots, tubes, &c."

"As to earthen or metal chimney-pots, tubes, funnels, or cowls, of any description whatsoever, if such pot, tube, funnel, or cowl be higher than 4 feet above the brick or stone-work of the flue on which the same is placed, *then* it must be fixed 2 *feet* at the *least* into the brick or stone-work of the flue, *on which it shall be placed.*"

There can be no doubt but this is a very proper regulation in the affixing these tubes, and much to be preferred to the old and clumsy method usually adopted in piling brick-work upon a flange, and round the pot or tube; but that the Act requires any notice to the district surveyor for such a trifling work cannot be admitted; and less so that *any* FEE is payable therein. It is true that if a "*chimney pot, &c. higher than 4 feet, is not fixed at least 2 feet into the chimney-shaft and flue.*" that then (but not if properly constructed) the 13th and 18th sects. may be put into operation against the party committing the irregularity; both these sects. provide for the payment of all costs and charges to which the district surveyor may be put in rectifying irregularity: but he is certainly not to be paid *regular or irregular* by a FEE. I am borne out in this opinion upon reference to the amended Bill in the committee of the House of Commons, previous to the "*amendments and alterations*" proposed to the Committee of the House, and assented to by them. In that Bill, among a great many other objectionable fees, was a fee specially set forth of 10*s.* *for inspecting chimney-pots, shafts, funnels, &c. above a certain height.*

This and several other fees for trivial matters were opposed by the society I had the honour to represent, and I may venture to assert, that the result was an alteration and expunging of these unnecessary and objectionable inflictions. It is therefore to be exceedingly regretted that attempts are made or making in *many instances* to inflict upon the unwary a fee not *justified* by any part of the Act; and further, there is no question that the surveyor or surveyors exacting a fee for chimney-pots, smoke-pipes, tubes, &c., will assuredly bring himself or themselves under the operation of the 79th sec. of the Bill. In a word, the legitimate fees *demandable* will be found to be quite remunerative for any of the ordinary duties to be performed; for any special services provision is made to meet all such services by special fees. This being the case, and any costs or charges, expenses or loss of time, in compelling or putting in force its regulations and enactments, being also fully and amply provided for, and which charges are set forth in schedule L, in the Bill, it is to be hoped that charges will not be made upon the public not authorized by the legislature.

Dorset Place. H. BIERS.

[The above letter did not arrive in time for us to offer any observations upon it in the present number. We shall do so hereafter; the subject of it, as will be seen by our leading article, has already occupied our thoughts.—ED.]

MISTAKES IN ESTIMATES.

SIR,—The steady course you have always pursued with respect to professional disputes and grievances, and the decided stand you have always made against crooked dealings connected therewith, induce me to make known to you the particulars of a transaction in which I have been recently engaged, and regarding which I conceive that I have a just cause of complaint. In so doing, I trust that others may benefit by my want of caution, and by my loss. In the remarks upon St. Paul's Church, Herne Hill, which appeared in your publication of the 4th instant, it is stated that the amount of the estimate for the building was 4,500*l.*, and details are given to prove that the actual outlay did not exceed that sum. This agreement between the estimate and expenditure is generally a theme for well-merited praise, and deservedly so when the conditions of the contract are fairly carried out; but cases may arise, and in the one I am about to trouble you with, has arisen, when very different deserts to those of praise should be awarded. It was my lot to be the unfortunate sub-contractor for the masons' work of the church in question. My calculations were made from quantities supplied by Mr. Broomfield; after which an agreement was handed to me by the chief contractors, Messrs. Howard and Son, which, in an unguarded moment, supposing all was right, I signed. By this I undertook to do the work agreeably to plans and specifications furnished by the architect, and which I distinctly understood were the same or similar to those made use of by Mr. Broomfield. As I progressed with the work, I soon discovered that the quantities supplied by Mr. Broomfield were very deficient when compared with the plans and specifications supplied by the architect. I remonstrated with each party, but to no effect; Mr. Broomfield said that he did not take out the quantities himself, but copied them from the architect's book of dimensions. The architect said that he had nothing to do with it, and referred me to Mr. Broomfield. Messrs. Howard and Son said that I had the same quantities that were supplied to them, and that I must abide by my written agreement. Without troubling you with the full particulars of the loss which I contend has been most unjustly forced upon me, I will mention that one item in the quantities supplied by Mr. Broomfield was 322 feet of stone in quoins to buttresses taken at 7 inches by 5 inches, while in the plans and specifications supplied by Mr. Alexander, all the quoins were to be 9 inches by 5½ inches. I can prove that upwards of 1,000 cubic feet of stone have been used more than my calculations were made for, and this, together with the labour upon it, amounts to a very considerable sum. I shall feel obliged by your giving insertion to this communication in your columns; it is a transaction that ought to be generally known in the trade, as it may act as a warning to others.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM SUGDEN.

Gravel-lane, January 18, 1845.

[The circumstances stated do not seem to reflect in any degree on the architect. Mr. Sugden's remedy is against the party who took out the quantities.—ED.]

REPAIRS COMMENCED BEFORE JANUARY 1ST.

SIR,—I commenced some rather extensive alterations in a house in one of the metropolitan suburbs (removing old pots, rebuilding part of chimney, stuccoing the front, &c.) about the 15th of December last, and had finished the chimney before the scaffolding for the front was erected, which was this week.

I am applied to by the district surveyor for "a notice," which, as we commenced operations before the new Act came into force, I do not think proper to send.

You will oblige me by giving your opinion on this subject to your numerous readers, among whom is yours, &c., ALPHA.

January 17, 1845.

[This is an important question, and one which, as we desire our opinions to be regarded, we cannot definitely answer without the fullest information. One alteration or addition commenced before the 1st of January, and therefore not within the control of the Act, would not exempt from its provisions *another* alteration or addition commenced after the 1st, although in the same building. If the whole were included in one specification, and contracted for before the 1st of January, the matter would perhaps be open to question.—ED.]

SIR,—I am a journeyman carpenter, and want to make myself acquainted with architecture, drawing, &c.; but from the numerous works published, I do not know which to buy that would be most useful to me; and after reading your leader of THE BUILDER, January 4th, I resolved to seek your advice. Your opinion would oblige and serve

ONE OF YOUR SUBSCRIBERS.

32, Shaftsbury-street, City-road,

January 20, 1845.

[Our correspondent's inquiry is a more difficult question to answer fully in a few words than it may appear to be; but we recommend him to read Mr. Hosking's two treatises on Architecture and Building, published by Longman. He can perhaps borrow them, rather than buy. As to drawing, he would find facilities for learning the rudiments cheaply at one of the literary institutions—the Mechanics', for example, in Southampton buildings.—ED.]

SLABS AND HEARTHS UNDER THE NEW ACT.

SIR,—In the new Building Act, schedule F, it is required, that the hearth of every chimney must be laid and bedded wholly on brick or stone, or other incombustible substance, which must be solid for *a thickness of* 9 *inches* at least beneath the surface of any such hearth. Will you be kind enough to inform me how I am to manage that, as the joists in my specification are only 6 inches deep, and the floor 1 inch thick.—Yours,

Shadwell, Jan. 21, 1845. J. T. LOVELL.

[Our correspondent mistakes hearth for *slab*. The Act directs, as he correctly states, that the hearth (on which the stone stands, within the opening) shall be bedded on incombustible substance at least 9 inches thick: but regarding the slab, in *front* of the opening, it simply provides that it shall be laid on stone or iron bearers, or brick trimmers, without mentioning any thickness.—ED.]

Miscellanea.

CLERKENWELL IMPROVEMENTS. — At a meeting of the Middlesex magistrates held last week at the Sessions House, Clerkenwell, the report of "the committee appointed to ascertain if any and what alterations and repairs are necessary to be made in the Sessions House," was read. It set forth that the present building was entirely inadequate for the purposes of the county, especially for the business of the sessions, whether in regard to the accommodation of the prisoners, to the offices for the clerk of the peace, to the comfort of the judges, the jury, the bar, the press, or the public. Mr. Wilson, in moving that the report be printed and circulated amongst the magistrates, begged that they would all come and examine the present building, and, if they were to do so, he was satisfied they would instantly approve of the suggestions which the committee had made in the report as to a remedy for the evil. Mr. Rotch said the county would be much benefited by the adoption of one of the suggestions, which was that the present building should be pulled down and the site let upon building leases for the new street in continuation of Farringdon-street; and that a new Sessions House should be built on some waste ground belonging to the county, nearly opposite to the House of Correction. The motion was agreed to.

GROWTH OF TOWNS NEAR RAILWAY STATIONS.—A village of 200 houses and a population of 1,000 souls, has sprung up at the Wolverton station on the London and Birmingham Railway. A church and parsonage house have been built at an expense of 4,000*l.* We learn from the *Railway Record* that the railway company have given a room for the use of the Wesleyan methodists, and have established day and sunday schools, where 250 children are educated under the charge of the clergyman. A reading room and library, savings' bank, and musical club, have been established and are working satisfactorily.

PROPOSED RAILWAYS.—The Board of Trade are throwing overboard the new schemes by wholesale, but it remains to be seen whether or not their decisions will be allowed to pass unquestioned. It seems dangerous to entrust such powers as this Board seems to wield to a small number of individuals.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. CANICE.—This, perhaps the most perfect and beautiful of the ancient cathedrals in Ireland, was lately threatened with destruction by fire, caused by the overheating of one of the flues. Mrs. O'Brien, the bishop's lady, first observed that flames were bursting from the roof of the cathedral, and gave the alarm. After about an hour's active exertion on the part of the military and the inhabitants, it was completely extinguished, without further injury having been sustained than the partial burning of a few rafters and the stripping off of some of the slates and lead.

SOIREES TO FELLOWS OF ROYAL SOCIETY. —Lord Northampton has issued his invitations for Saturday, February 22nd; March 8th and 15th; and April 5th.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.—The buildings composing Greenwich Hospital, which have hitherto been unprotected from the ravages of the electric fluid, are about to be supplied with Harris's lightning conductors.

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